

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
March 22, 2006
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on March 22nd at 1:35 p.m. at the Elihu Harris Building, Auditorium.

Members Present: Fran Florez, Chair
Joseph Petrillo
Lynn Schenk

Members Absent: Marc Adelman, Vice Chair
Donna Lee Andrews, Vice Chair
Rod Diridon, Sr.
T.J. Stapleton

Opening Comments

Chair Florez welcomed the audience and Oakland Mayor Brown to the Meeting.

Mayor Brown welcomed the High-Speed Rail Authority to the city of Oakland. Mayor Brown spoke of his support for the High-Speed Rail project and commented that the Legislature should provide the funds to build high-speed rail.

Members Reports

Member Petrillo reported that there is a major disconnect with the public of California and the California State Legislature. There is a large public support of the High-Speed Rail Project, but there seems to be a lack of support from California's elected officials.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed reported that CHSRA staff and several advocate groups have spent hours meeting with and providing information for the Members of the Legislature and appearing at Legislative Committee Hearings. Executive Director Morshed reported that one of the difficulties that High-Speed Rail faces is the fact that High-Speed Rail is a statewide project. It concerns about 80% of the California Legislature's districts, but it is not any one particular district project. Individual Legislatures are waiting for other Legislatures to move the project forward. This situation will continue to be a challenge for the High-Speed Rail project.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the large activity in Sacramento relative to bond measures. The major bond packages did not succeed. The last discussion entertained in bill form did not have any interim money for high speed rail, but also did not repeal the \$9.95 billion bond measure that is currently scheduled for November.

Executive Director Morshed expressed gratitude to those who have written letters, made phone calls or appeared before committees in support for high-speed rail. It will

still take more concentrated work with individual legislatures to show the benefit to individual districts.

Executive Director Morshed reported the budget meetings are coming up in April and staff will be testifying in front of the budget committees. Executive Director Morshed reported that the Legislative Analyst's Office recommended the Legislature goes along with the Governor's proposal to repeal the 9.5 billion bond measure and close the high-speed rail office. There is a great deal of uncertainty regarding high-speed rail and there will be many discussions in the Legislature between now and when the budget passes.

Executive Director Morshed pointed out that the next scheduled board meeting is in May and may not be necessary. Therefore, the next board meeting may not be until July.

Member Petrillo commented on the Executive Director's report and the so-called infrastructure bond that has been talked about in the Legislature. As one of the solutions to the transportation needs, the people of California will expect something for \$200 billion dollars that does more than simply treads water for the state transportation needs. If the current suggested infrastructure bond for expanded highways passes, the state will be spending twice the amount of taxpayers money with what high-speed rail costs to carry the same number of people. Member Petrillo encouraged supporters of high-speed rail to get the word to all of state's elected officials.

Presentation of Potential HST Alignments and Station Locations between the Bay Area and Central Valley and Evaluation Criteria

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt presented a set of potential HST alignments and station locations for investigation and draft Evaluation Criteria for the "Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS". Deputy Director Leavitt discussed the next steps in the program environmental process.

Public Comment

Rich Wright, Grassland Water District Grassland Resource Conservation District

Mr. Wright expressed the opposition to any alignments through California grasslands.

Charles Luckhardt, Luckhardt Family Ranch

Mr. Luckhardt expressed gratitude to the Authority for all of the hearings and studies being conducted and the responsive of the Authority staff. Mr. Luckhardt expressed his appreciation of the staff's site visits, including the bringing of experts to look into the wetland areas and endangered species.

Alan C. Miller, Train Riders' Association of California

Mr. Miller expressed the pleasure in the studies taking place on the Bay Area/Valley alignments. Mr. Miller expressed gratitude that the alignments through and around Henry Coe Park have been eliminated from the studies.

Michael Sarabia?

Mr. Sarabia expressed his support for the high-speed rail project. Mr. Sarabia expressed the need for high-speed rail because of rising oil prices and reduced traffic congestion.

Clarence R. Fischer

Mr. Fischer expressed concern over high-speed rail replacing BART due to the need of trips provided every 15 minutes at commuter times. Mr. Fischer expressed the need to have any alignments chosen for high-speed rail include connection to BART and Amtrak or other public transports at stations.

Kenneth Ryan, Sierra Club of California

Mr. Ryan expressed support for the inclusion of the Altamont Pass in the alignment studies. Mr. Ryan commented the need to eliminate any southern routes that would impact California grasslands.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.